

Press Release

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Science & Technology Agency Supports Industry-Driven Research

The Arkansas Science & Technology Authority awarded \$55,492 in funding through its Applied Research Grants Program to help support two Arkansas industries. Awards were approved by the Authority's Board of Directors at its January 21 meeting.

An award of \$13,0000 for each of two years was approved for the investigation of "off-flavor" catfish, a natural occurrence caused by certain odorous chemicals, such as 2-methylisoborneol (MIB), which are produced by natural populations of bacteria and algae. The presence of these chemicals decreases the marketing potential of catfish by 50%-80% during the late summer and early fall. In 1992 alone, Arkansas producers had more than 3 million pounds of food-sized catfish held from the market due to off-flavor.

While chemical and physical water treatments have been unsuccessful in attempting to remove these compounds from catfish ponds, catfish have been shown to metabolize them. Working from this premise, Dr. Daniel Schlenk, Assistant Professor of Toxicology at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Principal Investigator for the project, proposes to enhance the metabolism and breakdown of the off-flavor chemical, MIB, by the addition of an enzyme-

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inducing agent to the catfish feed, while fish are placed in purging tanks designed to enhance the rate of MIB removal. Southern Farmers Services has agreed to provide \$13,000 for each year to support this research.

A second award of \$29,492 was approved for a project to design and develop instrumentation that will assist the Remington Arms Company, Inc. to evaluate the properties of primers used in sporting ammunition. This research will help Remington Arms determine the most efficient composition of the explosive materials used in the various primers in an effort to improve its product and deal with continuously changing environmental laws. Mr. Paul C. McLeod, Associate Professor for Electronics and Instrumentation at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and Principal Investigator of the project, believes the success of this research project will play a significant role in helping Remington Arms continue to manufacture sporting ammunition in Arkansas, thus making present jobs secure, as well as increasing the number of employees at the Lonoke plant. Remington Arms has appropriated funding in the amount of \$30,884 for this project.

The Applied Research Grants Program is just one of the programs of the Arkansas Science & Technology Authority designed to support technology-based economic development. In place since 1986, this particular program assists Arkansas businesses by awarding grants to researchers to tackle industry-driven problem statements. The business or industry provides a co-match and is eligible for Arkansas State income tax credits. For more information on this and other Authority programs, contact the Authority's office at 324-9006.